

SOME POSSIBILITIES FOR SHORT-RUN IMPROVEMENTS IN CURRENT
POSTURE/PLANNING

1. As Polaris submarines are added to the force, they become available as a potential strategic reserve of long endurance. Airborne alert, if directed, would increase the force capable of surviving no-warning attack; short-term measures could increase the flexibility of this force, including:

(a) planning and briefing for alternative target systems;

(b) communications improvements and other preparations to extend the interval during which planes in the air could await commitment or could be retargeted or recalled.

2. Currently-planned mobile, back-up command centers can greatly improve the possibility of an authorized response under all circumstances of enemy attack. At the least, they should very sharply reduce enemy hope or confidence of paralyzing U. S. response by attacks on primary command centers. They even furnish some low-confidence "protection" to primary command centers by lessening or eliminating enemy incentives for hitting primary command. Highly reliable means of communication of "execute" messages to all forces are also relatively short-term possibilities.

3. Given the planned improvement above, immediate measures might be taken throughout all commands to emphasize that there will be no reliance upon unauthorized "initiative" under any circumstances. Physical safeguards against unauthorized action -- such as a "lock" device on weapons, if that proves

feasible and desirable -- and safeguarded command post procedures governing the authentication and issuance of "execute" messages could be implemented. Weapons inherently difficult to safeguard from accident or unauthorized action while on high alert status could be immediately removed from such status.

4. Planned bomb-alarm readouts at bases and command posts will give further assurance to an enemy that he cannot paralyze U. S. response.

System design could be altered to provide more reliable indication of base status and of the size and pattern of enemy attack (e.g., whether some or all major cities are being avoided), if it proves feasible to protect the system against larger attack than is now planned. The bomb-alarm system could be extended world-wide. This system alone could provide sufficient information, though in a gross form, for some significant choices by surviving commanders, e.g., in mobile command posts (although it would be highly desirable to have broader, more reliable and more discriminating information as well).

5. Plans for Minuteman missile system design could be changed to allow selective firing of individual missiles, and varying degrees of flexibility in retargeting individual missiles. The time interval during which commitment could be delayed or retargeting accomplished (currently, six hours from attack on system) could be extended.

6. Current plans for siting new missiles near or upwind of major cities could be altered.

7. Alternative options could be provided covering significantly different target systems, use of reserves, and timing of attack. For certain of these,

different sub-options could be planned corresponding to different patterns of base-destruction resulting from no-warning or low-warning enemy attack.

8. Specifically, options might provide for the exclusion of Communist China, or of individual Satellite nations, from attack. Options might provide for the exclusion of urban-industrial centers, or governmental control centers from direct attack, and for the minimization of non-military casualties from remaining attacks. Sub-options might allow for the exclusion of primary military controls, to the extent that this is compatible with attack upon Soviet bases and sites.

9. Provision could be made for maintaining experienced political authorities and staff outside of Washington at all times, with adequate communications and information inputs. At the least, this could minimize the loss of immediate political direction in the event of a single bomb or small attack involving Washington.

10. Preparations could be made to reduce sharply the vulnerability of the highest national authorities, including the President, in the event of warning, by transfer to mobile or concealed sites.

11. Preparations could be made increasing the possibility of swift, reliable communications with Allied and enemy leaders prior to and during attack.

12. SAC operational doctrine and procedures could be modified to permit halting further attacks at any time that communications permit.

This list is not at all exhaustive, but includes changes that do not seem to involve relatively large amounts of both time and money; most of them involve changes in planning or procedures for operation of capabilities already existing or planned. These measures alone would promise to reduce the possibility of accident or unauthorized action, improve deterrence of attack (by assuring effective response) and deterrence of attack on command centers, and give surviving leadership increased freedom of action, including the option to minimize enemy and Allied damage consistent with the achievement of U. S. national objectives, and to use threats of reserve forces against unhit targets to discourage the enemy from attacking U. S. cities or from continuing the war. They do not happen to imply increases in force size; nor do the improvements achieved depend on any superiority in force size to Soviet forces.

Other measures might be highly worthwhile, but have not been included in this list because they might be somewhat more controversial, more expensive or more time-consuming; they are not essential to the improvements cited in the achievement of U. S. objectives. Some of these measures would include adequate fallout protection (even minimal fallout protection could reduce greatly the casualties from a small or countermilitary attack), improved post-attack reconnaissance and information capabilities, and post-attack command capabilities greatly superior to the mobile posts mentioned. Though major improvements are possible without these measures, they would contribute greatly to the U. S. national objectives listed.

Still other capabilities, still more expensive, longer-run, or uncertain in their promise, would be needed if more ambitious U. S. military objectives

TOP SECRET

were adopted. These might include a large, protected bomber force for armed reconnaissance; large numbers of protected, large-yield, high accuracy missiles; a large anti-ICBM program, if feasible; and a massive civil defense program. Whether or not these measures would be desirable on various grounds, they do not appear required to achieve the U. S. national objectives listed (which focus, with respect to the military outcome of hostilities, on preventing enemy superiority, with high assurance under all conditions). They are not implicit in the postural requirements described; and they may well be undesirable, on the basis of cost and uncertainty or in terms of their possible effects on Soviet expectations, the arms race, and the possibility of reaching arms agreements.